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The following articles have appeared in the *Sphinx*:—

No.
33.—Sunday Evening with the Secularists.
34.—A Morning with the Unitarians.
37.—The Rev. W. A. O'Connor.
38.—Taking Holy Orders under Bishop Lee.
38.—A Children's Chapel (Rusholme Road Independent).
39.—The Swedenborgians (Rev. John Hyde).
41.—St. Mary's, Hulme (Rev. F. C. Woodhouse.)
41 —The Stowell Memorial Church.
42.—Birch Church (Rev. Canon Anson).
43.—An Evening with the Christian Brethren.
45.—Manchester Cathedral.
45.—Sale Independent Chapel (Rev. Edward Morris).
46.—The German Church, Greenheys.
47.—Ritualism in Manchester (St. John Baptist's).
48.—St. Saviour's Church Rev W. F. Birch).
50.—The Rev. J. A. Gardiner (Presbyterian).
51.—Church Music in Manchester (Holy Trinity, Hulme, and the Jesuit Church).
52.—A Morning with the Baptists (Rev. H. J. Betts).
53.—The Church of the Ascension (Rev. C. T. Watson).
53.—Northen Churchyard.
54.—The Wesleyan College, Didsbury.
55.—St. Michael's and its Rector (Rev. G. S. Allen).
58.—Great Fast of the Jews.
59.—Deserted Churches: 1. St. Clement's.
60.—The Rev. J. A. Macfadyen.
61.—Deserted Churches: 2. St. Mary's.
62.—The Rev. G. W. Conder.
65.—Deserted Churches: 3. Sacred Trinity, Salford.
67.—Cheeryble Brothers' Church.
68.—A Visit to the Parish Church, Ashton-under-Lyne.

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January 22nd, 1870.
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at prices which in some cases are considerably below the cost of manufacture. A general summary of the Late and Present Prices will be found below in their several departments. In all cases the goods are of first-class make and material, and are of thorough good value at the original prices.

SUMMARY OF DEPARTMENTS.

No. 1.

GENTLEMEN'S COLOURED DRESS.

	Late price.	Reduced price.
Fancy Trousers	14s 6d	8s 11d
Fancy Trousers	15s 6d	10s 6d
Fancy Trousers	17s 6d	12s 6d
Fancy Trousers	20s od	15s 6d
Fancy Vests	5s 11d	3s 11d
Fancy Vests	6s 6d	4s 6d
Fancy Vests	7s 6d	5s 6d
A large Lot Imitation Seal Vests	6s 6d	3s 11d
Shooting and Morning Coats	20s od	14s 6d
Shooting and Morning Coats	22s 6d	17s 6d
Shooting and Morning Coats	25s od	20s od
Shooting and Morning Coats	30s od	25s od
Overcoats and Reefers	16s 6d	13s 6d
Overcoats and Reefers	20s od	15s od
Overcoats and Reefers	25s od	20s od
Overcoats and Reefers	30s od	25s od

The more choice and expensive goods are all reduced in proportion, and a few Garments slightly out of condition, not specified in the above list, will be offered at one half the value.

No. 2.

BOYS', YOUTHS', & GENTLEMENS BLACK DRESS.

	Late price.	Reduced price.
Boys' Suits	16s 6d	12s 6d
Boys' Suits	18s 6d	14s 6d
Boys' Suits	20s od	15s od
Youths' Suits	22s 6d	17s 6d
Youths' Suits	25s od	20s od
Youths' Suits	30s od	25s od
Gents' Black Trousers	12s 6d	9s 6d
Gents' Black Trousers	14s 6d	10s 6d
Gents' Black Trousers	16s 6d	12s 6d
Gents' Black Trousers	18s 6d	14s 6d
Gents' Black Trousers	20s od	15s od
Gents' Black Vests	5s 6d	3s 11d
Gents' Black Vests	6s 6d	4s 11d
Gents' Black Vests	8s 6d	6s 6d
Gents' Black Coats	20s od	16s 6d
Gents' Black Coats	22s 6d	18s 6d
Gents' Black Coats	25s od	20s od
Gents' Black Coats	30s od	25s od

The best Superfine West of England and other high-class Goods are offered at a proportionate reduction. In this department there are several large lots of odd garments for boys, youths, and gentlemen, which will be offered remarkably cheap. They embrace all sizes and qualities.

No. 3.

BOYS', YOUTHS', and MEN'S CORD and MOLE DEPARTMENT.

	Late price.	Reduced price.
Men's Cord Trousers	6s 6d	5s 6d
Men's Cord Trousers	7s 9d	6s 9d
Men's Cord Trousers	9s 6d	8s 3d
Cord and Mole Vests	5s 6d	4s 6d
Cord Jackets	17s 6d	14s 6d
Flannel Jackets	4s 6d	3s 6d
Flannel Jackets	5s 6d	4s 6d
Duck Jackets	2s 9d	2s 3d
Duck Overalls	2s 9d	2s 3d
Boys' Cord Suits	10s 6d	8s 6d
Boys' Cord Suits	12s 6d	10s 6d
Boys' Cord Suits	14s 6d	12s 6d

In this important Department there are many cheap lots of Soiled and Job Goods not to be met with in the usual way. This Department includes dress for artisans of every trade.

No. 4.

BOYS' and YOUTHS' COLOURED DRESS.

	Late price	Reduced price.
Boys' Imperial Suits	10s 6d	8s 6d
Boys' Imperial Suits, all wool	12s 6d	10s 6d
Boys' Imperial Suits, all wool	16s 6d	12s 6d
Boys' Imperial Suits, all wool	17s 6d	13s 6d
Boys' Imperial Suits, all wool	20s od	15s od
Youths' Suits	16s 6d	12s 6d
Youths' Suits	18s 6d	14s 6d
Youths' Suits	22s od	16s 6d
Youths' Suits	25s od	20s od
Boys' Overcoats	10s 6d	7s 6d
Boys' Overcoats	12s 6d	10s 6d
Youths' Overcoats	14s 6d	11s 6d
Youths' Overcoats	16s 6d	13s od
Youths' Overcoats	20s od	15s 6d

There is also a numerous lot of Odd Jackets, Vests, and Trousers, which will be offered at a price which must of necessity clear them speedily.

No. 5.

HATS, CAPS, UMBRELLAS, WOOL SHIRTS, &c.

In this Department there are many lots of Goods offered, the purchase of which will involve a clear saving of 5s. to 7s. in the pound.

	Late price.	Reduced price.
Men's Felt Hats	3s 6d	1s 11d
Men's Felt Hats	4s 6d	2s 11d
Boys' Caps	1s od	0s 9d
Boys' Caps	1s 6d	1s od
Boys' Caps	2s od	1s 6d

Wool Shirts 15 per cent less than usual prices. Umbrellas in proportion.

Our stock has ever been, and still remains, marked in plain figures, and, as the reduced price is marked in red ink on the same ticket, the extent and bona fide character of the reduction will at once be apparent.

The Sale will continue from Saturday, January 22, to Saturday, February 19, inclusive.

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G. R. Allinson, General Manchester Warehouse) Families supplied, Any length cut from the Piece at Wholesale Prices. (54 & 54a, High-st.

ON THE ATLANTIC.

I.—OUTWARD BOUND.

FROM time immemorial poets have sung and painters have painted the beauties and wonders of the ocean. It has been apostrophized and described as a mighty monster, the multitudinous and much-sounding sea, and the murmuring surge that on the unnumber'd idle pebbles chafes. This globe was once but a foul and pestilential concourse of vapours; as it is written by the Seer, the earth was without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep; but the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters, and there was light. The multitudinous sea, emblem of the Deity, encompassing the earth; without beginning and without end! "The sea is his and He made it, and his hands prepared the dry land." If there is any truth in the saying that man is what he eats, so it must be equally correct that he is what he breathes, and oxygen, ozone, and sea salt must affect his fibre, brain, and vital energies. In no part of these islands are we beyond the reach of the sea breeze. We are bound up with the sea as part and parcel of our existence. Just as we are born with "immortal longings" in us, so do we turn our faces towards the sea, as naturally as a child turns towards its mother. A popular writer has said that many youths who have never seen the sea in their lives instinctively turn towards it, and seek it out with a passionate desire that will brook no opposition, and, having found it, they cast in their lot with it, live on it, probably die on it, and are buried in it, and "of their bones is coral made." Living "contiguous to a melancholy ocean," as Mr. Disraeli remarked of the Irish, we are, without doubt, influenced by it both morally and physically, just as some natures are affected by the changes of the moon, by electric currents, by thunder and lightning, fire, hail, snow, vapour, stormy winds, and other elements of nature. Of course, there are men of such unsympathetic and prosaic natures that they are not influenced or disturbed, or fancy that they are not, by any such phenomena; and, physically speaking, a man may derive health from the briny breath of the ocean and yet find no pleasure or significance in its boundlessness, its unfathomable depths, its mysterious and suggestive utterances. The man who has never seen the sea, who has never been afloat, is deficient in a portion of his mental and moral economy. Of course, his education can never be complete in this sublunary sphere, but, in this case, a rudimentary foundation is wanting. We recollect once hearing a gentleman remark of the sea, to another who had bought one of Turner's works, "The sea! Why do you buy pictures of the sea? I think it is a nasty, stinking thing. It makes me sick." That was the opinion of a member of the British Parliament, a large landed proprietor, the owner of factories, of iron and coal mines, of the whilom racehorse Pilho da Puta, and other estates. That was his opinion, according to the light which was in him.

Although but an average sailor and liable to the usual maladies on shipboard, the sea has always had to me a strange fascination. At any time I should prefer a sea voyage to a journey by railway. In a railway carriage one is "cribbed, cabin'd, and confined," begrimed with dust, deafened and dazed by noise, and made altogether miserabte. I have travelled by rail for four days and nights without intermission, and crawled out of the carriage more dead than alive. I believe that I possess the average courage of my countrymen, but somehow or other I have never been able to get over a certain amount of nervousness about railway travelling. One is so absolutely at the mercy of one or two officials who may be off their guard for a single instant, a contingency which may send you to everlasting smash. Now at sea there is at all events plenty of room, and if the ship gets disabled you can take to the boats. Even if you should happen to be blown up you will come down soft, and not be left torn, mangled, and palpitating on the hard ground. At sea, unless you are absolutely prostrated by sickness, one can move about, and few things are more exhilarating than scudding before the wind in a spanking breeze, with the steam up and all sails set; while, unlike a long railway journey, one comes off a voyage in better health than at starting. Accordingly, although I had not been without certain disagreeable experiences of sea voyages, when a chance occurred for me to cross that ocean which we familiarly term "the herring pond," I gladly availed myself of the opportunity, and shipped on board one of the magnificent steamers of the Cunard Company, which in this paper we shall take the liberty of calling the Lima, Captain Rock commanding.

A good deal of bustle and excitement prevails on board an outward-bound vessel as she prepares to leave her moorings. Even in the Cunard steamers, where everything goes on with the regularity of clockwork, and the absence of fuss which is a notable characteristic of a well-manned ship, the scene is a stirring one, particularly among the passengers. As the tender generally brings on board a number of their friends, there are leave-takings to be gone through, a process which leaves certain outward and visible signs of emotion on the faces of the women in particular. It is also to be noted that the friends who are left behind are more strongly agitated than those who are about to proceed to sea. The novelties, real and anticipated, which surround the latter may assist in upholding their equanimity and good spirits, whereas many of those who remain behind have, comparatively speaking, a blank before them. The coolest people on board are the captain and chief officers, and a few old stagers among the passengers who have crossed the Atlantic many times, who smile at the very idea of sea-sickness, and, in fact, look as much at home as if they had never done anything but trod the deck all their lives. These are an object of envy to the nautical tyro, who has a latent fear, from previous limited experiences, that he may be dreadfully unwell during the greater part of the voyage. In the latter category I may include myself, as being not altogether free from certain qualms in anticipation of the malady of sea-sickness. As a representative of the former class of seasoned travellers, who professed to court old "Neptune's salt wash," there was an elderly gentleman who earned for himself the *soubriquet* of Mr. Guzzles, from his remarkable prowess with the knife and fork during the passage. This was his eleventh trip across the Atlantic, which he made lighter of than an ordinary Manchester man, taken at random, does of sailing to the Isle of Man. Proud of his experience, and being of an obliging, not to say officious, disposition, he made himself at home with his fellow-passengers before the vessel was off Holyhead. As for sickness, "pooh! stuff and nonsense! All imagination, sir; only take a plate of oatmeal porridge *before* breakfast at sea; better than any doctor's stuff for keeping your"—well, preserving the healthy action of the viscera, "with a pint of champagne for lunch if you feel at all uncomfortable, and you will be as right as the mail." This was Guzzles' advice, with what result subsequent events will show.

With regard to myself I confess I had no such sanguine expectations, although on some former occasions fortune had been indulgent. According to my experience, the fickle jade is so capricious in this respect that I was not without misgivings. I had previously made numerous short trips by sea, varying in length from two to forty-eight hours, with varied success and comfort. I have felt exceedingly squeamish and shaky in crossing Morecambe Bay, and been in a wretchedly collapsed state between Liverpool and the Isle of Man. On the other hand I have sailed from Liverpool to Dublin, Greenock, and on the North Sea past Aberbrothock, where Sir Ralph the Rover tore his hair, and cursed himself in his despair, as far as Aberdeen, by no means a pleasant passage in dirty weather, and been perfectly well the whole voyage. At another time, two hours in the Channel between England and France have nearly been the death of me. In this respect women seem to suffer more than men. Whether it is that their stomachs are weaker, or their imaginations and susceptibilities quicker I cannot say, but they are generally the first to succumb and the last to revive. I have seen women become quite sick and faint before the ship left the dock. The doctor of the Lima told us that they were like Mrs. Dombey, as described by Mrs. Chick, when little Paul was ushered into the world—the saloon lady-passengers would not "make an effort," but went and remained below, and expected him to cure them with physic. From my

own experience, I should say, play no pranks with yourself, but study what to eat, drink, and avoid. When nature will hold out no longer, take your punishment like a man, and have recourse to the fresh air as soon as possible. The opinion of the surgeon was confirmed by the chief officer or first mate, a stout Scotchman, who remarked of the passengers, "It's no wonder they are ill; they eat such mixturs, and the leddies are the worst of any. The men can get round by themselves, but the leddies must always have the doctor to pheesic them."

It was on a fine September morning when I went on board the Lima. The applications for berths had been so numerous that I was obliged to be satisfied with half of the chief engineer's cabin on deck, which was given up by that officer to myself and an old gentleman, an Englishman by birth, but who had lived in the United States for half a century. This change from below is no disadvantage, except in rough weather, when one is more exposed, and the noise is much greater at night. Unfortunately, however, the old Yankee, for such he was to all intents and purposes, was in bad health, and lay in his berth all day. The consequence was that at night he was particularly wide-awake, and would insist upon talking at the most untimely hours, when I wished to sleep. He never was in the least sea-sick, but only suffered from some of the infirmities of age, and was quite indifferent about the weather, whether it was perfectly calm or blew a hurricane. But of the old Yank, who was quite a character, I shall have more to say anon. After seeing the ship safe out to sea, and having passed the incoming sister vessel of the same company and received three rounds of cheers from her passengers, Captain Rock came down from the gangway, leaving the command in charge of the next officer. The chief business with passengers at sea appears to be eating, and their wants are liberally provided for in the Cunard steamers. First there is breakfast at nine, perhaps the most enjoyable meal on board ship, as the exigencies of the cuisine necessitate most meats being cooked by steam, which spoils the flavour of the viands and gives a monotonous taste to the dishes at dinner. Lunch is served at twelve, and if you are disposed to make a dinner of it, it is quite within your power to do so. Indeed, those passengers who were well did really partake of two dinners each day, one at twelve, and another of a heavier and more elaborate nature at four. The latter meal is the event of the day, and the supply of fish, flesh, fowl, vegetables, puddings, pastry, and fruit, is most profuse. As the chief mate said, the passengers are addicted to "mixturs," particularly the Americans on board, who have generally "got through" their meals and partaken of a greater variety before the Englishmen have half finished. The number of diners varied very much with the state of the weather. On the first day, over one hundred and twenty cabin passengers dined together in the saloon, which has a series of tables running down each side to the stern, the captain presiding at the head table. The attendance is extremely good, generally two stewards being allotted to each table, which is capable of holding about a dozen guests. A particular seat is allotted to each passenger, which he retains throughout the voyage. This is one of the first things he ought to look to, as much of the comfort of the passage depends upon it. The favourite seats are at the captain's table, and are allotted to passengers of distinction, or those who may have been introduced to him, or ladies committed to his charge. At the appointed hour the noble army of waiters, or stewards, as they are called, enters the saloon, and in single file they march up the valley between the tables, each halting at their respective posts with military precision. At a given signal from the commanding officer, executed with a confidence and decision of purpose equal to that displayed by Captain William Hartshorn on a field-day with his regiment of volunteers, and with an imposing flourish of the arm, after the manner of Professor Anderson while executing a brilliant feat of legerdemain, down go all the dishes on the tables at the same moment, and off go the covers. Another military manœuvre to the rear is then effected, speedily followed by another advance with more supplies in the shape of vegetables and other adjuncts. Thus the guests are not kept waiting, and, unlike a dinner at the large restaurants and dining rooms of this and other towns, the meal does not degenerate into a barbarous and unseemly scramble. But concerning this and other subjects, we shall have more to say in a second and concluding article.

BEST CLIMATE FOR A TOPER.—The temperate zone.

[OUR LOCAL ART TREASURES.]

PORTRAITS AND PICTURES AT THE TOWN HALL.

AS the pictures in the possession of the large collectors of works of art in Manchester and the neighbourhood are almost unknown, except to the owners and their immediate friends, it will no doubt be interesting to that portion of the general public (and it is not a small one) who have a regard for the welfare of art in this district, to know how many precious and noble pictures are placed in the galleries of our most educated picture buyers, and to have some slight descriptions given of what may be termed our local art treasures. It is proposed, therefore, to enumerate, and as far as possible to describe, the contents of the principal collections in and round Manchester, and by such criticism as may be obtained, by contrasting works of opposing styles (a criticism, of course, not reaching the lengths allowable in the case of a public exhibition), to show the tendency of taste as it at present exists among the most celebrated of our picture buyers; and as there is no doubt that, with few exceptions, they are representative, to show the tendency of taste in the general public also.

From time to time there have been suggestions of different kinds for a central and permanent gallery of art in Manchester, and it was but lately that an able and important lecture was delivered here by Mr. Cole, C.B., on the subject. Though there are no signs at present of any attempt to start such a desirable institution, still it has been thought advisable that these papers should include notices of such pictures as are already public property or, at any rate, so far public that they can be seen without payment, such as the collections in the Manchester Town Hall and at Peel Park, Salford, and (on payment) the permanent collection of paintings at the Royal Institution.

We propose to commence with the pictures at the Town Hall. They are eighteen in number, and, with two exceptions, portraits; and as in a majority of cases (twelve out of sixteen) they have been paid for by public subscription, it may be concluded that they represent men of whom Manchester has some reason to be proud. Therefore it will worth while to examine in what manner the likenesses of our men of note of this generation have been, and are likely to be, given to posterity; also what kind of taste and judgment influenced the persons on whom fell the responsibility of choosing the artists. The following is a complete list of the works, with the names of the painters and donors :—

WORK.	ARTIST.	DONORS.
The Good Samaritan	G. F. Watts, R.A. ..	The Artist, as an expression of his admiration of Thos. Wright, the Prison Philanthropist, 1852.
The Creation	Snyders	The late Earl of Ellesmere.
Ald. Sir Thomas Potter, Knight, First Mayor, 1838-40	Wm. Bradley	Ald. John Brooks.
Ald. Wm. Nield, Mayor, 1840-42	R. B. Faulkner . ..	Subscribers.
Ald. Jas. Kershaw, M.P., Mayor, 1842-43..	Wm. Bradley	Do.
Ald. Alexr. Kay, Mayor, 1843-45	G. Patten, A.R.A. ..	Do.
Ald. W. Benj. Watkins, Mayor, 1845-46..	Do. ..	Do.
Ald. Sir E. Armitage, Mayor, 1847-48.	Do. ..	Do.
Ald. Sir John Potter, Knight, Mayor, 1848-51..	Do. ..	Do.
Ald. Benjamin Nicholls, Mayor, 1854-55..	Richard Hooke.. ..	Do.
Ald. Ivie Mackie, Mayor, 1858-60	Do. ..	Do.
Ald. Thomas Goadsby, Mayor, 1861-63..	W. J. Mückley.. ..	Mrs. Goadsby, exchanged for subscription portrait by C. Mercier.
Ald. C. J. S. Walker	G. Patten, A.R.A. ..	Subscribers.
Mr. George Wilson	Do. ..	Do.
R. B. Armstrong, Q.C., M.P. ..	Grant	Do.
Mark Philips, sometime M.P. for Manchester.	G. Patten, A.R.A. ..	Do.
Joseph Brotherton, M.P. for Salford..	W. Bradley.	Mr. John Harding
Richard Potter, M.P. for Wigan, 1832-39..	W. Reynolds	Mr. T. B. Potter, M.P.
	BUSTS.	
The Queen	M. Noble	Ald. R. Barnes.
The Prince Consort	Do.	Art Treasures Committee.
The Prince of Wales	Do.	Ald. Heywood.
The Princess of Wales..	Marshall Watts	Ald. R. Neill.
Joseph Brotherton..	M. Noble	Brotherton Memorial Committee.

Passing by the earliest portrait, that of Richard Potter, M.P. for Wigan, painted by Mr. W. Reynolds, which is very quaint and not

without merit of a certain kind, we will take the three portraits by the late Mr. William Bradley, viz., Sir Thomas Potter, the first mayor of Manchester; Joseph Brotherton; and James Kershaw, alderman and mayor of Manchester, and M.P. for Stockport. Of these, the likeness of Sir Thomas Potter is the best; in fact, by far the best of the whole sixteen. The ease and grace of the attitude, a certain strong masculine character, and admirable colour and quality of painting, make it a picture worthy of a place in any gallery of portraits. Not quite so good, but still to be commended, is that of Mr. Brotherton. Hung far too high to be seen fairly, it cannot be severely criticized, but the pose of the figure and composition generally is inferior to that of Sir Thomas Potter. The third of Mr. Bradley's pictures is the weakest; it is neither so harmonious in colour nor so graceful in design, and the arms are strangely too short.

Mr. George Patten, A.R.A., seems to have been the favoured painter of portraits of mayors in Manchester, no less than seven of the sixteen being by him, and all presented and paid for by their fellow-citizens. There is very little to be said for these portraits. They are of the most stereotyped kind; very fair likenesses no doubt, reasonably correct in drawing, and harmless in colour, but utterly devoid of force or individuality, and amusing for the sameness of their design and accessories. In fact, taking the portraits all round, it is remarkable how little invention is shown. There are so many identical table-cloths, so many tables with parchments on them, and so many editions of what, at all events, looks like the same curtain. It is the same with the attitudes. Sir John Potter has his hand on a table, with parchments; Sir E. Armitage has his hand on a chair; Mr. Alexander Kay has his hand on a table, so has Mr. W. B. Watkins, so has Mr. Mark Philips (but without parchment this time, for a wonder), and so, no doubt, would Messrs. George Wilson and Charles Walker, but, being only half-lengths, they have not the opportunity. The two portraits of Mr. Alderman Nicholls and Mr. Alderman Mackie, painted by Mr. R. Hooke, do not call for any special remark; they are in much the same style as those by Mr. Patten, and, like his, are presented by "fellow-citizens." Of the three remaining portraits, that of Alderman Neild, mayor, 1840-2, by Mr. Faulkner, is the most successful. There is in it the best effort after originality in action and style to be found in the Hall, except in Mr. Bradley's Sir Thomas Potter.

Grant's portrait of Mr. R. B. Armstrong, Q.C., the late Recorder of Manchester, is hung in so dark a place that it is almost impossible to say what it is like. Moreover, the figure is entirely black, being painted in a barrister's robes; but it seems powerful.

The portrait of the late Mr. Goadsby is by Mr. Muckley, and was presented by Mrs. Goadsby, in exchange for one by Mr. Mercier which had previously been presented by his "fellow-citizens." Whether Mrs. Goadsby thought Mr. Mercier's portrait so good that she wanted it herself, and, if so, how she persuaded the corporation to give it up for Mr. Muckley's; or whether, on the other hand, she was ashamed that Mr. Mercier's should remain, and considered Mr. Muckley's worthier of the place, we don't know; but, in any case, there seems some sharp satire somewhere on somebody. Mr. Muckley's picture is far from successful. It is ungraceful and hard, and, though pretentious, is utterly devoid of dignity. Few things are more difficult to achieve in portraiture than a satisfactory posthumous likeness, and Mrs. Goadsby must have been very ill-advised, or she would have chosen some artist who had made portrait painting his speciality, instead of imposing a work of such difficulty upon a gentleman best known for pictures of still life and genre.

Another work belonging to the city, a likeness of the late Alderman Walter Clark, by Mr. Crozier, is at present hung in the Town Hall, Chorlton-upon-Medlock, to which township Mr. Clark rendered invaluable services for more than a quarter of a century. As a picture it is more satisfactory than most we have noticed, though there is in it the same want of invention in pose and background as in most of the King Street portraits. Mr. Clark is standing, with his hand on a table; the table is covered with books and parchments; there is a red chair and, of course, the inevitable curtain. Still the painting is manly and the colour agreeable, and it is hard upon the artist that it should be exiled to the Chorlton Town Hall, where it is seen by few and is practically consigned to oblivion.

Two more pictures remain to be noticed. The Creation, by Snyders, given by the Earl of Ellesmere, and hung in the entrance hall, is a very large work, and consists of a kind of Noah's ark collection of all manner of birds, beasts, and reptiles. It has all the cleverness of Snyders' work, but as usual is more interesting, certainly, than beautiful. The Good Samaritan, by G. F. Watts, R.A., like all this great artist's work, is full of nobility of design, and is characterized by a solemnity of colour rarely seen in modern work. It is almost cruelty to hang one of Mr. Watts's pictures beside any portraits except his own; and perhaps the portraits in the large room look weaker than they otherwise would do by contrast with The Good Samaritan.

After examining carefully the seventeen portraits, we can but come to two conclusions: the first that the earliest portraits (those by Mr. Bradley) are the best; and secondly, that from that time the taste of those who appointed the artists who should execute the commissions has leaned towards that conventional style which requires a large canvas filled up with useless and feebly painted accessories, to supply the want of powerful and conscientious portrait painting. No doubt the price to be given in most cases is limited; but it is not too much to say that a simple head painted by Mr. Watts would be more valuable as a portrait, and, certainly, as a work of art worth all the portraits in the Town Hall put together. The likeness by Mr. Watts of Mr. Charles Rickards, which was exhibited a year or two since in the Royal Institution, and, to come nearer home, the portrait of Sam Bamford, by Mr. Percy, which, in consequence of unworthy hanging, was far too much overlooked in last year's exhibition, and many others, may be cited as showing how much may be done on a small canvas, if the money available be insufficient to purchase a full-length picture of the highest merit.

On the whole, if we are to have a civic art collection worthy of the city, we can hardly be said to have begun very well. The nucleus now in King Street will look poverty-stricken and extremely unsatisfactory when removed to Mr. Waterhouse's new palace in Albert Square.

A RHYMING MERCHANT.

IT is not every merchant who transacts his business on the Manchester Exchange under the comprehensive shadow of the ubiquitous Simpson. There be traders who contrive to do a capital stroke of business, especially round about suburban Manchester, who pay no toll to Simpson. They love to roam from one genteel residence to another, provided with a bag of considerable proportions and convenient elasticity, looking for bargains. We speak of the enterprising persons who are partial to "ole shoes, ole boots, ole hats, ole umbrellas," and the like. In saying that these useful persons cherish a partiality for unconsidered trifles, we don't mean to liken them at all offensively to the witty and wicked Autolycus. They usually call themselves "general dealers." The process of their transactions is in this wise. The man with the bag provides himself with a quantity of handbills, which he delivers at each house in a chosen district, announcing upon the handbill that he will call again for it in a couple of hours. In the interim you are besought to examine your store, and to have ready for the trader's arrival any kind of property you wish to part with. We had an opportunity, the other day, of perusing one of these trade circulars, and were much interested in the document. The author of this interesting bit of literature was of a poetical turn, and had evidently compiled his handbill laboriously and with an eye to the solemnity proper to a professional author. As a matter of convenience we will say that this combination of prose and verse is isssued by Jonathan Benbow. Mr. Benbow begins with a quotation. Mr. Benbow's quotation (if it be one) is clearly intended to propitiate the handmaiden into whose custody it is likely to be delivered. J. B. has probed the recesses of the human heart before marriage, and utilizes his discoveries. J. B. therefore, as it were, proposes a toast at the top of his bill—

> The Single married and soon so;
> The Married happy and always so.

This is at once a declaration of principles and a benevolent aspiration. By way of fortifying this observation with as much authority as he can, our author prints the royal arms below, with the legend V. R. on either side. Then follows the name of Jonathan Benbow, in striking characters, "from Manchester." The latter addendum, when it appears in print, has sometimes a tendency to raise in the minds of rural servitors

visions of opulence in connection with a "general dealer" not unserviceable to him in possible business transactions. But we must quote by the card. "General Dealer, viz., coats, waistcoats, trousers, shirts, hats, gowns, shawls, and articles connected therewith, too numerous for the limits of a bill, and, as the demand at present is so great, he will give the best possible price." Benbow is clearly not a political economist. They manage these things differently in the Simpson atmosphere. They don't say on the Exchange that there is a great demand for what they want to buy. They swear there is no demand at all, and that the article is a mere drug. But it is in poetry that Benbow especially shines. Here is a poetic catalogue of the things he is eager to buy, interspersed with touches of humour and philosophy:—

He buys old boots, shoes, and stockings,
Jackets, trousers, and smock frocking,
Towels, cloths, and cast-off linen,
Cords, cashmeres, and worn-out woollen.

Old gowns, caps, bonnets torn to tatters,
If fine or coarse it never matters,
Bed tickings, fustians, velveteen,
Stuffs, worsteds, cords, or bombazines.

He will purchase floor-cloths, dusty rags,
Old roping, sacking, and old bags,
Both cow and horse hair, broken glass,
Pewter or old brass.

Old saucepans, boilers, copper kettles,
Pewter spoons, and other metals,
Old coins, silver, or ancient buttons,
Old copper, lead, or iron spitoons.

Skins, whether worn by hair or rabbit,
However small your stock we'll have it;
We will buy old rags, however rotten,
If made of woollen or of cotton.

N.B.—So over your dwellings give a glance,
You'll never have a better chance,
Our price is good, our weight is just,
And mind we never ask for trust.

After J. B.'s customer has recovered his wind, disturbed a little, one may imagine, by this tremendous piece of rhyme, the author returns to prose:—"This Bill will be called for in two hours, when he will give you the best price in ready money for the above named articles. Please to shew this Bill to the Lady or Gentleman of the house." Then, by way of an afterthought, J. B. proceeds:—"Old Harness and other Leather, Kitchen Grease." Another afterthought occurs to Benbow:—"The best price given for Old Newspapers, Waste Paper, &c."

All we will say of our poet of the "useless lumber, which you may long have left to slumber," is to hope that his transactions with the rural parties whom he puts into good humour by a preliminary toast about matrimony, are always conducted on strictly business principles. But inasmuch as there is such a thing as poetical license, we trust Jonathan Benbow's "license" will never injuriously meddle with his liberty.

TOWN TALK,

AND THINGS IN GENERAL.

THE SPRING ASSIZES.

THE next assizes are fixed for March 5th. Mr. Justice Willes and Mr. Justice Brett will be the judges. Mr. Justice Willes, having served fifteen years, is entitled to a pension, and will resign his office at the end of the assizes. We presume it is not out of envy of his luck that his colleagues have consigned him for the second time consecutively to the heavy circuit.

"GUARDIAN" CORRESPONDENTS.

It would be really interesting to know upon what principle the *Guardian* inserts and rejects the letters of its correspondents. With regard to the few short lucubrations with which it generally heads its column, is there a certain standard of stupidity represented by a clerk who sorts them, which all such letters must attain, to get inserted? In its Tuesday's issue were two charming samples of the sort of letter that is after its own soul. One ran something like this:—Allow me to warn the public against the amount of base coin now about: I got a bad half-crown the other day. The other thus:—Allow me to call attention to the dangerous state of garden walls in Broughton: I was walking past Dr (Mr. ?) Walmsley's, when his wall fell down: was uninjured: I think the authorities ought to see to garden walls. Come, come, Mr. Howarth, why didn't you tell us what the authorities ought to do, before? Any fool can be wise after the event. Moreover, specify who "the authorities" are. Don't grumble at the air. Why there should be an epidemic of bad coin, because a correspondent of the *Guardian's* happens to have got a bad half-crown—why garden walls in Broughton should be drawn attention to any more than garden walls in Cheetham Hill—and what on earth Mr. Howarth's personal safety had to do with the readers of the *Guardian* or his argument—remain to us mysteries inscrutable.

THE THEATRICAL MONOPOLY.

At the Lyceum Theatre, London, a new author has been suffered to appear. Not under a regular old established management: that would be too much to expect: but under a new management that has procured this theatre and renovated it. It is rather difficult to form an opinion of the value of the new piece, as all the London newspapers that have noticed it, except the *Times* and *Pall Mall Gazette*, appear to have been prejudiced against it. It is very hard that when an unfortunate playwright has at length succeeded in overcoming managerial apathy, his appearance before the public should be resented by the press. Yet, a distaste to criticize the new man's piece is obvious in all the articles. In truth, the plot appears conventional and poor enough, and all the writers are careful to state that the audience was bored by it; but at the same time they are forced to admit that the dialogue in the first act was good, and the *Times* attributes to the whole of it the quality of "terseness hardly to be surpassed." If this is so, the author might have been received with greater favour by the newspapers in general, although the audience may not have approved his somewhat stagey drama. However, let one be thankful that he has been allowed to appear at all. Another new man is to be brought out in Liverpool before long; after that, in London. Altogether, there are just a few signs of a slight enlargement of the area of dramatic authorship. Indeed, matters have come almost to a crisis. With Mr. Boucicault ill, and Mr. Robertson's and Mr. Burnand's pieces getting damned upon production (for Mr. Robertson's new play or rather farce, *The Nightingale*, was greeted with a storm of groans and hisses last week), whom have managers to employ but Mr. Halliday, who does little more than adaptations, and Mr. H. J. Byron, who can't possiby find any time to eat or drink or sleep? We hear it said that Mr. Calvert is actually prepared to try a new drama, if one is forthcoming. For Manchester, that would be a novelty indeed.

THE BACHELORS' FANCY DRESS BALL.

THE following guests have unaccountably not had their names or costumes chronicled. We hasten to supply this unpardonable omission on the part of our daily contemporaries:—

NAME.	CHARACTER.
The Mayor.....	Victor Hugo, delivering an oration written in the crown of his hat.
Mr. William Grave.....	Hercules, throwing the cricket-ball.
Mr. Alderman Rumney.....	An alchemist of the middle age, inclining to the elderly, expatiating on the manifold virtues of atrocious stinks.
Mr. Alderman Heywood....	Tacitus (The Silent). (But was unable to sustain the character.)
Mr. Alderman Willert.....	De Ghost (widout de play of *Hamlet*).
Mr. W. R. Callender, jun...	Janus, with one eye on free trade, progression, and the future; another on protection, retrogressoin, and the past; and both on the main chance.
Mr. Charles Mercier..... (Artist-royal. N.B. Portraits of emperors, kings, queens, and princes-royal painted and presented to them on the slightest provocation.)	Performer on a brass instrument (his own property).
Mr. J. W. Maclure, J.P. ..	The man who hid his light under a bushel, and got "five bob or a week" for being drunk and disorderly.

Mr. Charley, M.P. .....Touchstone, chucking Audrey under the chin, upon her accidental admission on the register of voters for the Borough of Salford.

We regret to add that one of the hosts, no less a person than Sir Joseph Heron himself, arrayed as a Dictator, was keeping up his character outside the building by endeavouring to marshal the numerous carriages in attendance in the way that they should come and go, when he was summarily arrested in a dictatorial shout, for breaking his own peace, by an officious constable, who, baffled by the dictatorial garments, actually "knew not Joseph."

TIED TO BUSINESS.

OH! can all words of woe express
The fact of tied to business?
The dreary round of endless toil,
Far worse than tillers of the soil,
For they have light to cheer their way,—
Our sun, "a dirty cheese," whose ray
Scarce penetrates the smoky cloud
That wraps the city like a shroud.
At morn the office stool we mount,
And weary with the dull account;
At noon the hurried meal devour,
Which, half digested, serves to sour
The mind, the stomach, and seems sent
For pain instead of nourishment.
Writing and books till eve again,
Or, if some respite we can gain,
And get an errand through the street,
But scant improvement there we meet:
The sulphurous fume that serves for air,
With fog and smoke in portions fair,
Seizes with suffocating gripe
Upon the wanderer's bronchial pipe;
And, as we thread the murky maze,
No cheering object meets the gaze,—
No structures fair, no fashion gay,
No sign, nor symbol that can say
A goodly thing, or give a ray
Of hope, or joy, or happiness,
To him who's "tied to business."
The statues all "with verdure clad"
Of verdegris, or, just as bad,
With soot, whose only gracious part
Is in that it obscures the "art."

Or if our fate by fortune lay
In what is called "a larger way
Of business," does this phrase disclose
A better fate for eye or nose?
Ah, no! success can only send
A vague regret that we should spend
Our lives in digging gulfs to part
Us from all joys of soul or heart.
The noontide 'Change, the odorous throng
Of Oldham moist and Blackburn "strong;"
The fawning, bullying, dodging strife
Of men whose wits and brains, and life
Seem but devoted not to miss
The joy of "ties to business."

Even should a festive evening lend
A hope of respite, 'twill but tend
To light the candle at each end.
To work all day, all night sit up,
Can not be done, unless we sup
The cheering, but destructive cup.
Then the gorged liver's stern rebuke
Tells us at once we must not look
From out the bowl relief to gain:
It mental adds to fleshly pain—
We think with liver 'stead of brain.

[LIVING MEN OF LETTERS.]

8.—MR. GEORGE AUGUSTUS SALA.

LOOKING, with a merry, defiant, bold look, out of your photographic portrait album, which contains so many vile slanders upon yourself, your wife, and your friends, is one whose name stands at the head of the present paper, a Bohemian writer of a bad school, but yet a brave man; one that has done very little good, and yet one full of capabilities for good; a writer of sound English and a scholar, and yet a driveller of tipsy, high-flown, and high-falutin' nonsense; a man of understanding when he likes, and yet of bosh and nonsense too when he chooses to debase himself; one of keen intellect, high qualities, prodigious memory, great picturesqueness, and a photographic accuracy, and yet so utterly careless of his own reputation, of the dignity of letters, of what is due to himself, that he can sell his pen to describe a Jew clothier's, an advertizing furniture dealer's, a Liverpool draper's, a Manchester hatter's, or a St. Paul's Church-yard bonnet shop. A man who ought to have taken the lead on any paper, but one who, clinging to the old traditions of our pen-profession, has done but little upon one only. There is an odious Americanism, "reliable," meaning that those to whom it is applied can be trusted, or leant upon. In ninety cases out of the hundred G. A. S. will bring up his copy with the accurate regard to time which newspapers require, but at the last number in every decennial he will have failed. This has gained him respect with the dullards who generally conduct and start papers, who believe that a man of genius cannot but be irregular and eccentric. If the "genius" gets into the hands of the Jews, is often drunken, always in debt, sometimes in prison, and is totally disreputable, living *à tort et à travers* the rules of society, these newspaper proprietors think more and more of him, and go down on their knees and bribe him to write.

> Great wits to madness sure are near allied,
> And thin partitions do their bounds divide.

When the "great wit" writes a novel, draws all the money, gets in a mess with it, and asks somebody else to finish it whom he is unwilling to pay; or when he starts on his travels, leaving a proprietor of a periodical with a half finished serial on hand, the admiration of Bohemia, printer, and public, is enormous. The recalcitrant author is afterwards pardoned and received with open arms. What a clever fellow he must be for these people to stand this!

Such has been the reasoning with regard to Mr. Sala, of whom we, of course, do not narrate all these little fables. Yet such men exist, and the offences of such are condoned with wonderful ease by the public whom they do not touch, just as a reference by Mr. Charles Matthews to his little escapades with his creditors raises a merry laugh. To the stupid public it is a matter of dubious yet unmeasured admiration, this juncture of social unfitness and fluent verbiage which they take for wisdom. To think that you may see, let us say, Theodore Hook and Dr. Maginn rolling drunk in Fleet Street, and peacefully reposing in the kennel over night, and the next day read those highly-flown articles in the *John Bull* condemnatory of Queen Caroline in which it demonstrated that that poor lady had not one rag of virtue left to cover her, and that they (the writers) had a chestful of virtuous blankets and undergarments besides the superfine, double-milled, thick clothing they stood upright in—to think on this, is it not wonderful indeed! But reflect, oh, British public—those Pagan Romans did not choose *their* CENSORS thus!

Mr. Sala, who in the flesh is *goguenard*, jovial, and externally something like Bardolph, is a very severe censor when he chooses. He is of a mature age—let us say forty-

five—and has worked for the press nearly thirty years out of that, for he began early, and it is whispered wrote at one time for the virtuous Mr. Edward Lloyd, of Salisbury Square, certain romances of the Mrs. Radcliffe school, which our best novelists of to-day have copied, such as *Adah the Betrayed, or the Murder at the Old Smithy, Julia the Deserted*, and the like. These penny romances were not vicious, though morbidly exciting; one called *Sweeney Todd, or the String of Pearls*, related how a certain barber in Fleet Street cut the throats of his customers, and then sunk them down a trap to a kitchen, where they were made into, and whence they issued, as mutton pies! Whether our eccentric genius wrote that story we know not. But he worked hard and honestly at whatever came up, and we wish to heaven that some of the superfine, satin-wove, hot-pressed, gilt-edged, and fashionable novelists worked half as well and had had the same practice. Nothing in the world is there like it for style. Do you think, young author, that those easy incisive sentences, those quiet sly touches, those pretty turns of Sterne, or Fielding, or Thackeray, came by chance? If you do, you are as big a blunderer as Dogberry when he declared that reading and writing were the gift of Nature.

When Dickens established his *Household Words*, with its conceited motto,

Familiar in their mouths as household words,

which it never was, a dozen young knights of the pen rushed to aid the Arthur of the literary Round Table. Our hero was one, and as Mr. Dickens, with singular generosity and blindness, determined that everybody should "gush" as he gushed and write Dickenese as he wrote, the facile pen of Sala was in great request. Sketch after sketch of real verve and merit, each of which was attributed to the great Dickens, and many of which were republished in his name in New York, proceeded from Sala, notably "Captain Quagg's Conversion," "The Key of the Street," and others of the same sort. They were fresh, sparkling, and fast, written with abounding spirit and that sort of devil-may-care cleverness which is so pleasing to young men. When an author lets you into his confidence and knows everything, is equally familiar with a sailors' home in Wapping, a thieves' cellar in Liverpool, the Queen's palace at Berlin, the Emperor's cabinet in Paris, the Eleusinian mysteries, and the game of knur and spell, you know that you are reading the remarks of an uncommon clever fellow. The implicit confidence which young readers, and old fellows too, of the middle class, place in the dissertations of the young lions of the *Daily Telegraph* is founded on the love they have for the bold buccaneering style in which the latter write. We have it from a certain Camarilla that sits upon the wild lucubrations of some of these famous leaders that the grammar is very bad indeed, and as to the Latin, we know that even the lynx-eyed supervisors cannot keep *that* right. But what then—*Que voulez vous mes amis?* You get your lurid leader, all blue fire and glitter, and wonderful of its sort. Well, it *is* nice to read; but, after all, what does it mean? You begin a dissertation on the Virgin Mary, and you find that, ere you have read three lines, there is a learned essay on the Paphian mysteries and the wondrous rites of Venus. As for policy and study of the constitution of this great country, heaven only knows whereto the *D. T.* has led us! When that fine property was in the market, after the gallant Colonel Sleigh had brought it out and failed, there was a perturbation among the band of Bohemians who wrote its articles. Sala was among them, of course; does not everyone know his style? He had gone to Russia for Dickens, and was always talking of the Nevskoi Prospect and eternal snow. He has been here, there, and elsewhere, and he lets you know it. Happily for the band of penmen, the astute Hebrews of the tribe of Levy bought the *Daily;* its sale went up; advertisements made it pay, and Sala was very wisely made a special correspondent.

Perhaps, for a cheap paper, there is no man better fitted for this work. He cannot understand politics, but he is well up in art; he cares very little about religion, but he has a photographic eye. He does not write the blatant untruths and braggadocio of Mr. W——, the Parisian correspondent; but he does give you an insight into the manners of the people. Some of his touches are simply admirable. Take the second volume of *From Waterloo to the Peninsula:* the description of the laziness, misery, sunshine, rags, pride, and folly of Spain were never better given. A master of words he paints a figure at a touch, as that of the beggar, proud and sturdy, whose "rags were flamboyant behind, while his worn plush inexpressibles were *rayonné* in front." Gustave Doré, whose illustrations of Spain in *Le Monde Illustré* are in his best style, has no touch like it.

While doing all this hard work, and, according to his lights, doing it honestly and well, with no high aim, but giving the public what it asked for, and no more—trifle and whipt cream—not teaching the people, nor preaching to them, nor incidentally even reproving them, but amusing and tickling them, Mr. Sala republished many of his sketches, and one or two tales and stories that he had written. His books are not very successful. They have been issued cheaply or at a high price, but when the facile author removes to a higher class of writing or of readers he somewhat fails. Not more than one of his books can be said to have achieved a decided success. Mr. Sala's published works are as follows: *How I Tamed Mrs. Cruiser*, 1858; *Journey due North*, 1859; *Twice Round the Clock*, 1859; *The Baddington Peerage*, 1860; *Gaslight and Daylight*, 1860; *Lady Chesterfield's Letters*, 1860; *Looking at Life*, 1860; *Make your Game*, 1860; *Dutch Pictures, with some Sketches in the Flemish manner*, 1861; *Seven Sons of Mammon*, 1861; *Accepted Addresses*, 1862; *Ship Chandler, and other Tales*, 1862; *Two Prima Donnas*, 1862; and since that time, at intervals, *After Breakfast; My Diary in America in the Midst of War; From Waterloo to the Peninsula*, and *A Trip to Barbary by a Round-about Route*.

Of these books his light London sketches are the best and most successful, such as *Twice Round the Clock*, published first in the *Welcome Guest*, and illustrated by a very wooden and angular young artist, since dead, William Mc Connell. Perhaps it is unfair to call the poor fellow an artist, for most assuredly he understood no art; he was a wooden wood draughtsman, very hard and full of lines, but he had the merit of drawing the scenes from reality. Next in merit are the travels, which are full of observation and curious reading, for Sala, if a desultory student, is in some sort a scholar. He once talked of some poor woman "in a sleazy (thin and worn) shawl," whereon a pundit in the *Saturday Review* asked what is "sleazy," and did not know that ancient and perfectly correct but provincial word. He is a curious and out-of-the-way reader, and not to be sneered at. Next follow his touch-and-go social articles, beautifully calculated for the meridian of Cockneydom and the intellects of virtuous publicans, intelligent greengrocers, and the readers of the *Delirium Tremens* generally; and last of all in merit are his novels. Small wits talked of the *Badly-done Peerage* and the *Seven Tons of Gammon*, and not without reason were these names given. There are, however, pages of admirable writing in both, but character is beyond Sala's painting. His women are dolls, his men the tinselled theatrical figures we are all acquainted with as boys, and that is all.

And so we part with G. A. S. There has been the making

of many a good author in him. As Thackeray once said of him, he is "a horse big enough to pull any shay about," but he is a horse that does not go well in harness. To some his tipsy writing is odious; to few even his very best work can be of use. His face, as one can see in a coloured photograph, is an index to his style. He mixes up the characters of the Copper Captain, Bobadil, and Bardolph, and as he ripens he grows more truculent and self-assertive. His career is a *coup manqué*, and if he leave a name to survive till his youngest Bohemian admirer be an old man—for it will survive no longer—it will yet carry with it no affectionate reverence, and will not be conducive to any good whatever. He is a man of potentiality, not of accomplished fact. In the meantime, reckless writing has produced money, recklessly gotten and, it would seem, as recklessly distributed, and so far the end which the vivacious writer has aimed at in literature is answered. A nobler purpose would have achieved a nobler and far higher result.

A MORNING IN THE CITY POLICE COURT.

THE City Police Court, or the Borough Court, as it used to be called, was formerly held in Brown Street, in rooms which now form part of the Post Office, and was approached by the identical stone staircase on which our friends the Messrs. Walker, wearing the collar of their order, are now ascending and descending almost hourly, as at a perpetual and daily Bethel. There was formerly a confusion of doors in Brown Street between Market Street and the Post Office, and we used to think it about even betting whether we got into the Borough Court or the Bank of Manchester or the Commercial Inn. This might have been productive of some awkward consequences. Suppose you had gone into the Court, and, on saying you had come to advise a bill, were taken for a prisoner's attorney, and introduced to Bill Sykes! Could a policeman "take up" a bill, by the way, without a warrant? And again, what could you do with a banker's draft at a public? However, two of the difficulties have been removed, or have removed themselves. The Bank seems to have intended to run as far as that Paradise of banks—King Street, but got consolidated among the cloth agents' waggons in Pall-Mall just before reaching it. The Court must have meditated a bolder flight—to the New Bailey, perhaps—but it evidently couldn't "stay," and got no further than Bridge Street, where it was kindly taken in at a large drapery establishment whence most of the goods had been removed. The old business is not, we believe, quite abandoned, and a few handsome pairs of 'cuffs for ladies, and "gent's" wrist-links are still kept in stock, as well as a small assortment of neck-ties, but the latter are seldom enquired for.

The Court is held in a large, melancholy-looking building, of a dirty stone colour, fronting to Bridge Street, near Dole Field. The field is gone, but the Dole or doleful look remains, in fact hangs over all the neighbourhood. Arrived at the Court-house, we find two entrances at the front, the further one reserved for magistrates and barristers; but, not belonging to either class, we entered the nearer one, and found, to our left, a staircase which appeared to be modelled after that of Brown Street, and, to the right, a wide lobby or hall, with a passage leading we knew not whither. The general appearance of the place was something like the inside of a theatre by daylight, with the commoner portion of the gallery audience detained in charge of a few policemen. We were about to turn towards the stairs when we saw a door open at the back of this assemblage, showing us a glimpse of something like a Court, so we made our way in there, and found it was really a Court, but the gloomiest, dingiest-looking one we ever saw. On the magistrates' bench was our old friend Blumenrock, with his customary coat-bouquet. We were going down the side passage when we were checked for a moment by a police doorkeeper, who said, "I'm afraid, Sir, I can't pass you." We were fortunately provided with an impromptu, or "repartee to a policeman," which we had stayed in bed half-an-hour longer than usual that very morning to make, and it just came in. So we replied, "Well, never mind about that, for if you'll just step on one side, I'll pass you," and we passed, leaving him "much considering." We were now seated at table, and waited for the repast. The other guests were a young man who appeared to have come there to practise short-hand, another or two who seemed strangers, and a fashionably-drest young man with grey hair, who we found was an attorney. Speculation was in vain to account for the hair. Perhaps early study, or the errors of his clients, or the grief he had felt at losing sight of them for so many "months" together, had early blanched his curls, or was it that anomaly—an old head on young shoulders? There was a case going on, we found, but it seemed about as clear as a case we went once to see or hear in the Bankruptcy Court, only with this difference, that here there was some one in the seat of authority. There was a policeman opposite to us in a kind of pulpit, who seemed to be putting several nondescript articles into different positions before him and saying them off. There was a key, and a piece of bread, and a clothes-line, and a blacking-brush, and a pocket handkerchief, and some two or three more things, which were changed about so quickly that we couldn't tell what they were. Sometimes a question was put to him from the bench, sometimes by the clerk who sat in front, and sometimes by somebody we could not see. He retired, and an elderly, decent woman, like a labourer's wife, took his place and began manipulating the things, taking them one by one and putting them down with a troubled air, as if she knew there was some puzzle in them, but knew, also, that she couldn't find it out. After she had taken the oath, another policeman came and stood by her and gave her evidence himself, turning to her every now and then with a "Didn't you?" or a "Wasn't it?" which seemed to us a very sensible way of getting at all that a stupid, quiet person had to say, but couldn't, or wouldn't, at all events, didn't.

It suddenly flashed across our mind that, as there were plaintiffs or complainants, or whatever they are here called, so there must be a defendant or prisoner, or something of that kind; and just as this occurred to us, the flower-bedecked justice, turning his head to the left and, looking somewhere behind us, said, "Vat have you got to say to thish?" So we looked round and, on a small enclosed platform, saw a scarecrow of a lad of sixteen or so. He looked down, and muttered something we did not hear, but another interpreter in uniform answered, "He says he done it, your Washup;" and after a short conference with the clerk, Justice said, "It seems you are a fery bad boy, so you must pay tventy-shillins fine or go to prison for tventy-vun days."

> But what they kill'd each other for,
> I never could make out—

as old Caspar said, and we repeated the words almost unconsciously as they rose to our mind, for we could not then, nor could we of course ever since, make out what the matter had been about. But it was no doubt all right. At different places in the Court—window-ledges and such like—there were glasses holding some chemical mixture, exhaling disinfecting fumes to correct the foul atmosphere and evil odours of the place. No doubt the moral atmosphere was equally bad, though not so readily perceptible to the senses, and we hasted to escape from both to try the upper boxes.

Upstairs we found a larger-looking, certainly a lighter-looking and better ventilated court. The place for spectators was ingeniously contrived to be as small and as uncomfortable as possible. The accommodation on the Bench and at the table was much superior to that afforded in the lower Court, but the avenue to the table seemed to be more carefully guarded. On professing to be concerned in the case going on, we found it act as an "open! sesame," and we were again seated at the inhospitable board. We had scarcely sat down before a stout young man, with a weather-beaten face, disturbed us to let him pass. It seemed quite a day for business. Policemen flitted to and fro in the back ground, hastily, and occasionally a detective officer sauntered in and out again, slowly,—for who ever saw a detective in a hurry? On the Bench was the Stipendiary Magistrate, Mr. Headham, a tall, thin, youngish-looking man, of about thirty, with dark complexion, and long, thin, anxious-looking hands. He appears either to have but little confidence in his own judgment or to be exceedingly anxious to avoid making mistakes, for he is an unusually long time in giving his decision. With him sat on one side Mr. Alderman Nicholls, with visage long and as grave as a judge, and on the other some one we didn't know, but he made a good third whoever he was. Returning to the table, we found two old acquaintances of the Court of Record. There was our friend the rosy-looking Englishman, who took some remarks of ours, we have

heard, in but ill part, though we protest we like him and always did, and only thought that in the goblet of encomium we offered him we might safely mingle a little of the lemon-peel of criticism as a tonic. He came, or rather "appeared," on this occasion in what we think he used to call "forensic costume." Opposite to him was our other friend the wily orator, in plain dress, and each was accompanied by a variety of clerks and witnesses and other such people.

As it appeared the case these barristers were in would probably take some time, the bench decided to take the common business first; so we sat, in the intervals of getting up for our stout friend to go in and out, which was every ten minutes on an average, and listened to the "common" business. If this business is common to every day, we can only say we are sorry to know it. To sit there a whole morning—one morning even—is enough to make one think that the principal business of society is the detection and punishment of criminals, to say nothing of the large portion that is criminal itself. Sitting there, all other classes of life seem to be comparatively small and limited in extent. Commerce, the arts, philosophy, religion, learning, all those great divisions in which the activity and intellect of mankind have been exercised and displayed, seem there to occupy, compared with crime and its punishment, such small spaces as do the islands on a globe compared with the vast continents between which they lie. It was a sad sight, sadder than we could ever have imagined. Being led into these reflections, and seeing no way out of them but by flight, we left the counsel and their myrmidons to fight it out, whatever it was, by themselves. What a habit of mind a man must insensibly acquire, we thought, who, day after day and all the year through, is obliged to listen to such nefarious doings. The unpaid or ordinary magistrates can sit on the bench as often or as seldom as they think fit. We should think it desirable to have two paid magistrates, that one might sit for a week, and spend, during the presidency of his brother, the next week in endeavouring to cleanse his mind from the stains and sorrows it must have contracted from such exhibitions of degraded humanity.

A RAMBLE TO DIDSBURY.

ON a day "when the snow lay white," we sallied out on one of our suburban rambles, taking the direction of Didsbury. We have already described the road to Rusholme, and have said somewhat in praise of it. Beyond Rusholme its interest increases rather than diminishes, as it meanders along in pleasant curves and stretches by villa, lawn, and lea, until it reaches the broad and open country. For a considerable distance south of Rusholme it is flanked by houses, new and old; the new ones of mushroom growth and mostly of pretentious smartness. If there were nothing else to interest the pedestrian he would find sufficient entertainment in the varied styles and names that mark these genteel residences. There is so much that is indicative of snobbishness, of parvenu pretension, and of good and bad taste. Somehow one may always guess the character of the owner by the name of his abode when it has been of his own choice. Cowper sighed for "a lodge in some vast wilderness." Doubtless it was in the same spirit that the owners of the many "lodges" we pass give that designation to their homes, ornamenting them, however, with aristocratic and sentimental names that smack of fashionable novels. Here is a villa, Gothic in style, and built of red brick, with a limited area of ground about it planted with young and delicate saplings, which is dignified by the name of "Chase." Here is Fernlea, pleasant enough, but innocent of lea and fern. There are new houses, nameless and tenantless, standing forlorn, with little bills in their undraped windows appealing to the passer-by to go in and take possession of them. The old houses please us most: shady with growth of shrubberies and trees in which the rooks often build. The road is remarkable for the variety and number of its trees, most picturesque among which we think is the Scotch fir, with its gnarled bob of varied colours and its crown of dark glossy foliage, showing out well in the snowy landscape. One is pleased to see room made in the walks and on the footpaths for some of these noble trees.

Sauntering on, we pass through Fallowfield and reach Withington, with its lions—white, red, and golden—and its church, of Anglo-Norman style, inelegantly constructed of brick, which, however, the ivy is striving to make beautiful. Withington is supposed to have got its name from the withes or willows which grew hereabouts in the damp soil. It had its knight in the old days, as also had Fallowfield. On the left of the road is a triangular grass plot, known in ancient times, and yet, as Withington Green. Still further on, on the left, is a white house hid behind a high wall, and now a private residence, which, in the days of stage coaches, was a famous hostelry and posting-house. Presently we come in sight of that part of Didsbury known as Barlow Moor, though it is no longer a moor, but a straggling street of shops and cottages. On the right is a church with a diminutive spire, Gothic, new, and bijou, affording a strong contrast in its modern features to the solid, old-fashioned one we shall come to presently. Beyond Barlow Moor the road becomes again attractive, shady with tall trees, and fringed in its garden fences with thick-growing holly, upon which the scarlet berries burn brightly. We pass the Wesleyan College, suggestive of theology and studious ease, and before us, in the distance, is the white front of the Didsbury Hotel, which tells us that we have well nigh reached our destination.

Close to the hotel is the church, into the graveyard of which we pass and look about us. It is pleasantly placed on rising ground which overlooks the low-lying pastures through which the Mersey flows close by. The view from here is worth coming to see in any season. We look over a wooded expanse of country that stretches far away into Cheshire. On the other side of the stream the square tower of Northen Church rises among the trees. We know of no pleasanter situation for a church than this. It is an old building, indeed one of the oldest hereabouts. Originally a private oratory, founded somewhere about 1235, it became, in 1352, a parochial chapel. Like the old chapels of Birch, Chorlton, and Denton, it was constructed of lath, plaster, and wood. In 1620 it was rebuilt in stone, a tower being added, and subsequently it has undergone many changes, but still retains its antiquated appearance. The tower, which is of red sandstone, but older than the rest of the building, bears a curious inscription relating to the founders and benefactors of the church, and has also the date 1620 upon it.

The church is open We enter, and find the interior a mixture of old and new. Modern adornments have been grafted upon the stern simplicity of the old forms. At the east end is a beautiful stained window, by Wailes, of Newcastle. Through this the light comes softened and subdued, falling upon the carved angels that look down meekly with folded arms from the chancel arches, and which also are innovations. As befits Christmas time, the church is decorated with ferns and the usual holly and evergreens. The font, in the delicate arrangement of ferns upon it, is a wonder of patience and skill, doubtless the work of some fair devotees. Altogether, the church looks quaint, venerable, and rural, with its old-fashioned pews, heavy gallery, and oak coloured woodwork, pleasantly relieved with the glossy evergreens. The most important feature is a monument to Sir Nicholas Mosley, a patron of the church. He was born at Hough End Hall, not far hence, and entering upon commercial life, went to London, where he became Lord Mayor. In Stow's *Survey of London* we read, that in 1599, "was then Maior, Sir Nicholas Mosley, Clothworker, Sonne to Edward Mosley, of Hough, in Lancashire." He was knighted by Queen Elizabeth for his loyalty in raising 6,000 soldiers and sixteen ships, upon occasion when it was feared that Spain contemplated revenge for the destruction of the Armada. The good queen further displayed her gratitude to her loyal citizen by presenting him with an oak bed for his new house at Hough End. It would seem, however, that he was not so loyal on another occasion, when, as we read in Stow, the queen commanded that as mayor he should repair the Eleanor's Cross, in Westcheap, which had become dilapidated and dangerous. We read that "Some of her Majesties honorable counsellors directed their letters to Sir Nicholas Mosley, then Maior, by her Highnesse expresse commandement concerning the Crosse forthwith to be repaired, and placed againe as it formerly stood. Notwithstanding, the said Crosse stood headlesse more than a yere after." Thereupon, as we are informed, her majesty and the said counsellors, with greater emphasis and more success, prevailed upon his successor to complete the work. Perhaps Sir Nicholas had religious scruples regarding this cross, which seems to have excited public feeling at the time, for we read that "about twelve nights following its restoration, the image of our Lady was again defaced by plucking off her crowne, and almost her head, taking from her her naked child, and stabbing her in the breast." Sir Nicholas was buried here at Didsbury.

Leaving the church to wander for a while among the "Hic jacets" of the dead outside, we remark that many of the graves are very old. There are names on them that have been associated with Didsbury for 300 years, and are still known there. There are names, too, about the place of interest in other ways, among which is that of Browne. We are informed that William Browne, of Didsbury, married about 1749 Elizabeth, youngest sister of Captain James Dawson, the hero of Shenstone's tragic story of Jemmy Dawson, who was executed for his complicity in the rebellion of 1745. We linger about the churchyard and pore over the inscriptions on graves from which the snow has melted, until the light fades in the sky, and the woodland grows dim and ghostly. Then, turning our back upon them with their sad records,

> Each letter full of hope and yet of heartbreak,

and upon the wreaths of bright-berried holly and yew, placed on them by affectionate hands, but which the careless unfeeling wind seems to have tossed heedlessly about, we make our way home through the rapidly fading twilight.

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STARTLING QUOTATIONS

which we specified in Saturday's *Guardian*, and which we should not have been in a position to announce but for the operation of two causes—the one arising from the extreme Depression of the Markets, and the other from the fact that our negotiations have all been invariably completed by means of

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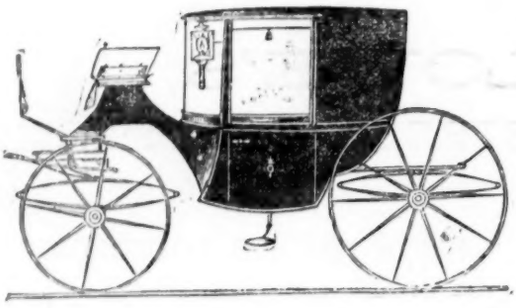

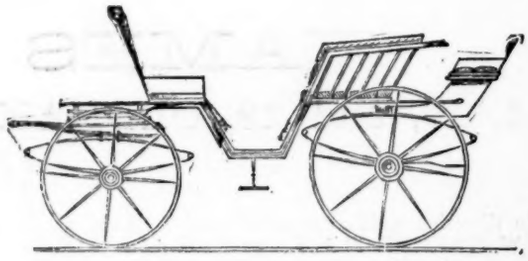

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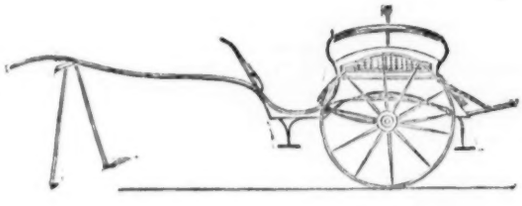

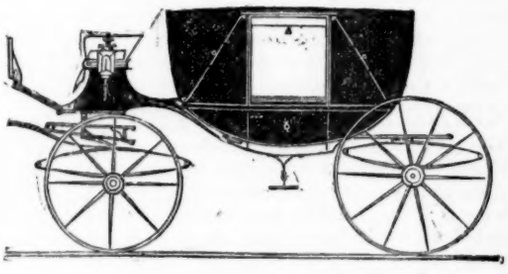

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MR. ROBERTSON'S NEW PLAY.

MR. B. Webster produced at the Adelphi Theatre, London, last week a new sensational drama by Mr. T. W. Robertson, entitled *The Nightingale*. It was a complete failure. The curtain fell amidst strong expressions of condemnation, the author, nevertheless, advancing to the footlights to bow his acknowledgments—a proceeding which only added a ludicrous touch to the unequivocal fiasco. That a man who can write such comedies as *Caste* and *School* should produce, says the *Athenæum*, a work which, like *The Nightingale*, has scarcely any dramatic significance, seems at first incredible. The same night that witnessed the downfall of *The Nightingale* saw the 300th performance of one of Mr. Robertson's comedies, which for a year has held undisputed possession of the stage—a circumstance almost, if not quite, unprecedented in theatrical annals. A close study of Mr. Robertson's plays shows, however, the cause both of failure and success. Knowledge of stage resource and power of dialogue are accompanied in them by delicacy and tenderness of treatment. So far as the empire of these extends Mr. Robertson is assured of triumph. He has, however, no dramatic invention. He cannot elicit situations from the collision of passions and interests. When, accordingly, incidents are depicted, they are such as have come under the author's observation in real life or in literature; and as the opportunities for personal observation are comparatively few, they are principally taken second-hand from novels or from plays. In lacking invention, Mr. Robertson is not behind most English dramatists—invention being in England the most rarely accorded gifts. He sinks, however, below his rivals in his ignorance of what class of romantic or sensational incident will affect an audience. With singular want of perspicuity, he seizes those points in a story which are the most melo-dramatic, extravagant, and at the same time least susceptible of dramatic treatment. *The Nightingale* does not present one original character or a single new or telling situation or event.

The season at the Holborn Theatre, London, terminated abruptly on Saturday week, Mr. Barry Sullivan having, it is said, lost a large sum of money in his attempt to reproduce old English dramas. The *Era* says his loss will amount to nearly £7,000.

FOX-HUNTING.—Sir Francis Head, speaking of the pleasures of the chase, gives an anecdote of a hard arguer in favour of fox-hunting:—Said the haughty Countess of —— to an aged huntsman, who, cap in hand, had humbly invited her ladyship to do him the honour to come and see his hounds, "I dislike everything belonging to hunting — it is so cruel."—"Cruel!" replied the old man, with apparent astonishment, "why, my lady, it can't possibly be cruel; for," said he, logically holding up three fingers in succession, "we all knows that the gentlemen like it, and we all knows that the hosses like it, and we all knows that the hounds like it; and," after a long pause, "none on us can know for certain that the foxes don't like it."

THE NOVELISTS AND THE WAITER.—Balzac and Gozlan, the well-known French novelists, were dining, or attempting to do so, at a restaurant at St. Cloud. After going through the bill of fare in vain, and to everything asked for receiving the reply that there was none left, Balzac continued, "Have you any leg of mutton *braisé*?"—"We have just served the last to an Englishman."—"Well, bring us a *suprême de volaille*."—"The last two fowls are bespoke."—"Then let us have a *carp à la maître d'hôtel*."—"We shall not have any till seven o'clock."—"Have you got any Sphinx?" chimed in Gozlan, who was beginning to lose all patience. "Sphinx, sir, I will see in the kitchen."—"Then bring us a dish for two!" The waiter went outside, as if with the intention of going to inquire, and then returning, said, with an air of sincerity, "There are none left, sir!" This was too much; Gozlan and Balzac burst into an uncontrollable fit of laughter, whilst the waiter looked as puzzled as any Theban might have done in presence of the monster itself. He had evidently been trained to say always, "We have none left!" and never, "We have not any!"

THE ROYAL ACADEMY.—One of the reforms in the Royal Academy, to take effect this year, will be that of anticipating by a week the usual time of sending pictures to the Exhibition, so that the Committee will be better able than before to do justice, not only to the contributors by examining the pictures more carefully than formerly, but to themselves in respect to their office. It is hoped that this anticipation of "sending-in" day will afford the hanging committee an opportunity of revising their arrangements to an extent which has not hitherto been practicable. The Exhibition will open to the public on Monday, May 2; probably, therefore, pictures will be required to be sent to Burlington House on the 28th and 29th of March next. The arrangement will not apply to the works of members of the Royal Academy.

LEARNING BY ROTE.—We met several little boys the other day who were chanting the multiplication table on their way to school, in that peculiar intonation of children when they recite by platoons. They had mastered the larger figures of the table when we came within hearing, and were finishing off, in a kind of *bravura*, with "Eleven times twelve are one hundred and thirty-two." Before they had time to commence on the final computation, we put in the question, "How many are twelve times eleven?" This was a poser, and the youngsters stood still in the middle of the road for a moment a little confused, when they moved on, apparently discussing the question among themselves, and probably coming to the unanimous and decided opinion that "no fellow could understand" it when put in that way.—*Elihu Burritt's Fireside Words.*

THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON'S COOK.—This celebrity must not be forgotten, the duke's *chef de cuisine*, than whom a better artist did not exist. During the battle of Waterloo, as, from hour to hour, thousands on thousands of fugitives poured along the village towards Brussels, or at least towards the forest of Soignies, crying that all was lost, "the English beaten," "the French victorious and coming," the incredulous cook continued, unmoved, his preparations for his master's dinner. "Fly," cried one after another, "the French are coming, and you will be killed!" but the imperturbable artist, strong in his faith of invariable victory, only replied, "No, I have served my master while he has fought a hundred battles, and he never yet failed to come to his dinner;" so he cooked on, spite of flying thousands; and the cook was right, the duke came, though rather late on this occasion.—*Lord W. Lennox's Recollections.*

TO READERS AND CORRESPONDENTS.

Communications should be addressed to the Editor, *Sphinx* Office, 37, Oxford Street, Manchester. Every manuscript should bear the name and address of the sender. All contributions are attentively considered, and unaccepted MSS. are returned on receipt of stamps for postage. No replies or MSS. can be delivered on personal application.

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